

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 71-73 without prejudice or disclaimer.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) Blending apparatus for a high speed blending operation comprising a container base and a container lid, the container lid having mounted thereon blending means arranged for a high speed rotation, the blending means extending through the lid and having, at one end, means for connection to a drive motor external to the container and, at the other end, a blending element for blending contents of the container when the drive means is operated, the blending means comprising a shaft portion locatable through an opening in the lid and incorporating the connection means, and a blending element portion associated with the shaft portion for rotation therewith, the container lid comprising a rim portion defining a circumferential slot having a radially inner side and a radially outer side and into which the top edge of the container is located when the lid and container are assembled together, ~~a the~~ radially inner side of the slot extending along an inner wall of the container and in contact with or closely adjacent the inner wall when the lid and container are assembled together, and wherein an outwardly convex portion is formed on the lid within the rim portion, the convex portion including the opening ~~into~~ through which the blending means is located, wherein the blending element includes blades arranged for operation and positioned entirely within the outwardly convex portion of the lid.

26. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the outwardly convex portion is of curvilinear dome shape and the blending means is located centrally thereof.

27. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the outwardly convex portion lies substantially level with the upper end of the container, when the lid is assembled on the open end of the container.

28. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the outwardly convex portion projects above the upper edge of the container, when the lid is assembled on the open end of the container.

29. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the outwardly convex portion is semi-spherical or part semi-spherical.

30. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the outwardly convex portion is transparent.

31. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein container lids assembled with the blending means are arranged to be nestable or stackable with other container lids, when not assembled with the container bases, one container lid being located inside another.

32. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the slot is defined by an outer portion arranged to extend around the top edge of the container, and an inner portion arranged to extend into the container in contact with or closely adjacent the inner wall of the container.

33. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 32 wherein a curvilinear joint is provided between the inner and outer portions of the slot.

34. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 32 wherein the inner portion extends between two and twelve times the distance of the outer portion.

35. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 comprising a support for an assembled container and lid with the lid located on the support, and a clamping member movable to engage the end of the container opposite the lid and locate the assembly during operation of the blending means, and wherein the clamping member includes a clamping surface engageable with the container and extending beyond the side edges of the container and comprising switch means for detecting an obstruction to a clamping action.

36. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the clamping member is reciprocally movable and, upon contacting the container to clamp the assembly, applies a predetermined force to the container in the direction towards the support.

37. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 36 wherein the clamping member is connected to a fixed member through spring means and, upon the clamping force exceeding a predetermined level, the spring means compresses and a signal is generated to stop movement of the clamping member.

38. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the blending element portion is arranged to be assembled with the shaft portion after the shaft portion is located in said opening.

39. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 38 wherein the blending element portion includes an opening through which the shaft portion is located to lock into said opening.

40. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 38 wherein the blending means is assembled onto the lid by first inserting the shaft portion through one end of

the lid opening, and then the blending element portion is locked onto the shaft portion at the opposite end of the shaft.

41. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 40 wherein the blending element portion clips onto the shaft portion and is secured thereto by shoulder means on the shaft portion and/or by welding.

42. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 comprising lubrication means to permit the contents of the container, during blending, to contact and lubricate the co-operating surfaces of the shaft portion and the opening into the lid, and wherein the lubrication means includes longitudinal slots in the side walls of the opening which constitute a sleeve for said shaft portion, the slots admitting the container contents to act as lubrication.

43. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the container lid includes a product access opening with closure means, the access opening being for accessing the contents of the container after blending.

44. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 43, wherein the access opening is in the form of a radial opening.

45. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the container lid includes means for holding product arranged to be mixed with material in the container before, during or after operation of the blending means.

46. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 45 wherein the holding means includes a pocket having an opening for introducing said product into the pocket.

47. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 46 wherein the pocket has mesh for permitting material in the container to enter into the pocket.

48. (Previously Presented) Blending apparatus according to claim 46 wherein the pocket is arranged to contain carbonation or flavouring means for carbonating or flavouring product in the container.

49. (Currently Amended) A container lid for mounting on an open ended beverage container, the container lid having located thereon blending means arranged for a high speed blending operation, the blending means extending through an opening in the lid and having, at one end, means for connection to a drive motor external to the container and, at the other end, a blending element for high speed blending of contents of the container when the drive means is operated, the container lid comprising a rim portion defining a circumferential slot into which the top edge of a container is located when the lid and container are assembled together, wherein the lid includes an outwardly convex portion formed within the rim portion, the convex portion including the opening through which the blending means extends, wherein the blending element includes blades arranged for operation and positioned entirely within the outwardly convex portion of the lid.

50. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the outwardly convex portion is of a curvilinear dome shape and the blending means is located centrally thereof.

51. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the outwardly convex portion lies substantially level with the upper end of the container, when the lid is assembled on the open end of the container.

52. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the outwardly convex portion projects above the upper edge of the container, when the lid is assembled on the open end of the container.

53. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the outwardly convex portion is semi-spherical or part semi-spherical.

54. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the outwardly convex portion is transparent.

55. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the lid defines an internal region in which the blending means operates, said region having curved surfaces.

56. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the lid includes a product access opening with closure means, the access opening being for accessing the contents of the container after blending.

57. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 56 wherein the access opening is in the form of a radial opening.

58. (Previously Presented) A container lid according to claim 49 wherein the rim includes slits extending in a generally axial direction.

59-73. (Canceled)\

74. (New) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the radially inner side of the slot extends between two and twelve times the depth of the radially outer side of the slot, the radially inner side of the slot having a lower end which is connected to the outwardly convex portion by a transition portion defining a lowermost end of the lid, and wherein the lid has an uppermost surface and the blades of said blending element are confined between said uppermost surface and said lowermost end of the lid.

75. (New) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the lid has an upper surface, and wherein the blades are configured to rest against or adjacent the upper surface of a

lid of the same kind and configuration when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.

76. (New) Blending apparatus according to claim 25 wherein the lid includes an upper portion having an annular gap, the lid further including an annular lower portion which is intended to locate in the annular gap of a lid of the same kind and configuration when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.

77. (New) A container according to claim 49 wherein the slot has a radially inner side and a radially outer side, the radially inner side extending between two and twelve times the depth of the radially outer side, the radially inner side of the slot extending along an inner wall of the container and in contact with or closely adjacent the inner wall when the lid and container are assembled together, the radially inner side having a lower end which is connected to the outwardly convex portion by a transition portion defining a lowermost end of the lid, and wherein the lid has an uppermost surface and the blades of said blending element are confined between said uppermost surface and said lowermost end of the lid.

78. (New) A container according to claim 49 wherein the lid has an upper surface, and wherein the blades are configured to rest against or adjacent said upper surface of a lid of the same kind and configuration when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.

79. (New) A container according to claim 49 wherein the lid includes an upper portion having an annular gap, the lid further including an annular lower portion which is intended to locate in the annular gap of a lid of the same kind and configuration when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.

80. (New) A container lid for mounting on an open ended beverage container, the container lid having located thereon blending means arranged for high speed rotation, the blending means extending through an opening in the lid and having, at one end, means for connection to a drive motor external to the container and, at the other end, a blending element for high speed blending of contents of the container when the drive means is operated, wherein the lid includes an upper portion having an annular gap, the lid further including an annular lower portion which is intended to locate in the annular gap of a lid of the same kind and configuration when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.

81. (New) A container lid for mounting on an open ended beverage container, the container lid having located thereon blending means arranged for high speed rotation, the blending means extending through an opening in the lid and having, at one end, means for connection to a drive motor external to the container and, at the other end, a blending element for high speed blending of contents of the container when the drive means is operated, wherein the lid has an upper surface and wherein the blending element has blades configured to rest against or adjacent said upper surface of a lid of the same kind and configuration, when two or more of said lids assembled with their respective blending means are stacked one on top of another.